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10/722,973

11/26/2003

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03/25/2008

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EXAMINER

KISH, JAMES M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3737

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03/25/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/722,973 | Applicant(s) MOHR ET AL. | |
| | Examiner JAMES KISH | Art Unit 3737 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 December 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9,11-17,19-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,10,12,13,18 and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Objections

1. Claims 1, 3, 12, 13 and 19 are objected to because of the following informalities:
2. Regarding independent claims 1, 13, and 19: These claims provide a "when" statement, which is similar to an "if, then." In other words, there are direction provided for when a systole or diastole phase is chosen, but no direction is provided for a situation when any other heart phase is chosen.
3. Regarding claims 3 and 12, there is a requirement for *both* an end systole and an end diastole volume to have been generated in these claims. However, independent claim 1 provides a method for selecting and generating one volume, that being either systole or diastole.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1, 3-8, 11-17 and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kanebako et al. (US Patent No. 5,680,471) in view of Devito et al. (US Patent No. 5,421,331). Kanebako discloses an image processor that acquires an image including a desired portion of an object to be examined. An image memory temporarily stores the acquired image, and an outline is extracted from an area of interest from the desired portion of the object (see Abstract). Kanebako contemplates X-ray imaging being the image processing method, wherein a left ventricle outline extraction method is available (column 1, lines 15-32). However, other imaging modalities may be used for such methods, as described at column 8, lines 60-67. In one embodiment, a profile synthesizing section selects an image at the end of diastole from the image memory. The operator then selects, thereby verifying, the image while watching images displayed on an image display section. Subsequently, the profile synthesizing section loads an end diastole image one frame ahead of the selected image into the second image memory. Processing is then performed on these images as further described in column 20, lines 54-67 and into column 21. However, as can be seen in Figure 2, before this selection process can take place the long axis must be set and a long axis perpendicular profile must be generated. Kanebako does not describe automatic determination of the long axis. Devito teaches a method for automatically identifying the long axis of the left ventricle. A first estimate of the long axis is created and is then fine tuned through the process described at column 4, line 48 through column 6, line 22. While never explicitly stating that Devito is determining the axis of inertia, as defined in the specification of the current application the axis of inertia is a

first estimate of the long axis. Therefore, Devito teaches this limitation. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate an automated long axis detection process into the system and methods of Kanebako to increase the utility of such a device and allow better results during cardiac studies (column 1, lines 44-46 of Devito).

It is noted that the portion of Kanebako where the selection of the end diastole is mentioned is only described by Kanebako as an example and is entirely capable, and intended to, acquire other phases of the heart cycle, including the end systole. This is suggested at column 9, line 61 through column 10, line 3, where Kanebako states that ejection fraction and cardiac wall motion analysis are obtained on the basis of the outline shapes determined at *both* the end diastole and end systole phases.

5. Claims 1, 3, 6-9, 12-13, 16 and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sheehan et al. (US Patent No. 5,435,310) in view of Devito et al. Sheehan discloses a method for imaging and three-dimensional modeling portions of the heart, in particular, the left ventricular endocardial and epicardial surfaces, using image data. Images are acquired via ultrasound or magnetic resonance and provide multiple plane imaging data at end systole and end diastole during a cardiac cycle (see Abstract). A magnetic resonance system provides image data for at least eight planes that are transverse to the longitudinal axis, i.e., parallel to the transverse axis of the left ventricle (column 6, lines 61-68). Also see column 11, lines 614-68. Both manual and automatic edge detection is contemplated at column 7, lines 20-33 and lines 58-61,

respectively. During at least one cardiac cycle, an end diastole and an end systole will be selected for each of the image planes. In order to determine which image planes are scanned at a particular time during the cardiac cycle, an ECG will be recorded during the imaging process (column 7, lines 42-48). By dynamically viewing different cross sections of The left ventricle from different points of view, a medical practitioner can monitor dynamic changes in cardiac function with respect to wall thickness and range of motion of the cardiac wall (column 10, lines 58-62 of Sheehan). However, other cardiac studies, such as perfusion studies, reference the position of the tissue region to the long axis of the left ventricle. Such a reference is inherently subjective because identification of the long axis of the patient's left ventricle requires a technician to use judgment (column 1, lines 36-42 of Devito). Devito teaches a method for automatically identifying the long axis of the left ventricle. A first estimate of the long axis is created and is then fine tuned through the process described at column 4, line 48 through column 6, line 22. While never explicitly stating that Devito is determining the axis of inertia, as defined in the specification of the current application the axis of inertia is a first estimate of the long axis. Therefore, Devito teaches this limitation. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate an automated long axis detection process into the system and methods of Sheehan to increase the utility of such a device and to allow better results during cardiac studies (column 1, lines 44-46 of Devito).

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 2, 10 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES KISH whose telephone number is (571)272-5554. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 - 5:00 ~ Mon. - Fri..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Casler can be reached on 571-272-4956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JMK

/Brian L Casler/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 3737

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